Carmi, Ill. Dec. 12 - 1912.

Mr. J. Seymour Currey, Chicago, Ill.

My Dear Sir:- Yours of the 9th Inst. is at hand. I am glad to know that you contemplate writing something that may immortalize the "Makers of Illinois."

This old town of Carmi had something to do with that work. There was a time when the old Territory had only three towns - Kaskaskia, Shawneetown and Carmi. The first of these is now in the Mississippi river. The second, a possible town in an impossible place on the Ohio river, built as a shipping point for the salt furnished by the Salines near the town of Equality now in the County of Saline - is now a dwindling old place, with a great amount of very interesting history.

In this work at the Salines slaves were used as laborers. When the Territory was erected into a State, there was an Article in the Constitution concerning the use of these slaves to the effect that this slave labor could go on for five years, when, at the expiration of that time, there could be no more slave labor in Illinois. At about the end of this

period a movement was set on foot to change the Constitution of the State, ~~so~~ limiting slavery.

About this time Albion, in Edwards county, was settled by a ~~the~~ colony of Englishmen headed by Morris Birkbeck and George Flower.

The slave question movement was headed by a Carmi man - Genl. Willis Hargrave - a friend of Genl. Jackson and the Government Inspector of the Saline Salt works. The infant State was saved from the slavery curse by the work of Morris Birkbeck. Some years ago I read a paper on this topic before the Illinois State Historical Society. Should you want to read it you will find it in Vol. 6 - Transactions of the State Historical Society.

Read also George Flowers History of Edwards County. It is Volume One of the Chicago Historical Society. It is a very interesting book - to me, because of this incident:- When I was a young fellow in 1860, I was Principal of the Grayville, Ill. schools. On my way, to and from school, I passed the residence of Mr. Chas. Agniel. It was in the summer time and I used to see a very old man and woman sitting in the shade of the trees in Mr. Agniel's lawn. One day Mr. Agniel - you will pronounce this name Angel - called me in and introduced me to the old couple. They were Mr & Mrs. George Flower, the parents of Mrs. Agniel, and pensioners on Mr. Agniel's bounty.

Another day Mr. Agniel called me into his store and asked me to read some manuscript. As I read it I found it to be a History of the English

Settlement of Edwards County, Illinois,
This was afterwards sent to the Chicago Historical Society. Shortly after this, the author George Flower, and his wife died on the same day, and about the same hour.
But to get back to that old manuscript. Please understand there was no Typewriter then, and the Ms. was kicked about, as few people had time to read it.
One day a member from the country picked it up and became interested. He asked permission to take it home; this was granted. While it was gone the Chicago fire happened. George Flower's History of Edwards County was all that was left of the Library.
Then a big hearted man stepped forward and said "We must preserve that. I will pay for the printing of one thousand copies. This was Mr. Levi Z. Leiter.
These books were the property of the Chicago Library. Not one of them was on sale. They were given to members of the Society. But I know the frailties of humanity, and thought that possibly, some of those books might find their way into the second hand book stores, so I asked my friend Capt. Thomas J. Porter to ransack those stores and see if he could not find one. This he did and wrote me that he had found one, but thought the price was prohibitive as to purchase. I wrote him to get it at any price. This he did. I am not going to tell you what I paid for it, neither will I give you the name of the owner. But on the fly leaf is this inscription:
Presented to — — By Albert D. Hagan, Secy.
Ill. State Historical Soc. Chicago, Ill July 29-1893
Living in New Harmony, Ind. are some grandchildren of Morris Birkbeck. I sent to these Vol. 6 of the "Illinois

4 State Historical" Transactions. From them I learned of a grand daughter of Morris Birkbeck Miss Lucy Hanks, living in England. I sent her a copy of Vol. 6 - From her I received a letter I hardly dare to copy and with this another "George Flowers History of Edwards County.

But I am spinning this out too long. Some other time I will tell you of the parting of the ways - between Flower and Birkbeck - and how this parting led indirectly to the tragical death of Morris Birkbeck.

I am afraid I have wearied you already

With Kind regards

Yours truly

W. T. Berry.